

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JOHANN 01408 201716Z

45

ACTION AF-08

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5014

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB SF

SUBJ: INDUSTRY CALLS ON GOVERNMENT FOR CHANGES IN STATUS
OF BLACKS

1. TRANSVAAL CHAMBER OF INDUSTRIES, ONE OF THE MOST
INFLUENTIAL EMPLOYER GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA, HAS
CALLED FOR SWEEPING CHANGES IN LAWS OF SOUTH AFRICA
AFFECTING THE STATUS OF BLACKS. IN A DOCUMENT RELEASED
TO THE PRESS AUGUST 19, FOLLOWING AND ADMITTEDLY
RESULTING FROM RIOTS IN SOWETO AND ELSEWHERE, CHAMBER
CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER TO OVERTURN MOST LEGISLATION
CURRENTLY ON BOOKS GOVERNING THE RIGHTS OF AND RE-
STRICTIONS ON URBAN BLACKS.

2. DOCUMENT CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO GRANT MUNICIPAL
CITIZENSHIP TO BLACKS WHERE THEY RESIDE AND TO TURN
OVER REAL POWER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO MUNICIPAL
BODIES ELECTED BY BLACKS ON SUCH THINGS AS LAND,
HOUSING AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURES. IT ALSO CALLS ON
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PAGE 02 JOHANN 01408 201716Z

GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY FUNDS BEING

SPENT ON BLACK EDUCATION WHICH, IT SAYS, SHOULD REACH A TOTAL OF R328 MILLION PLUS BY 1980. IT ALSO CALLS FOR MUCH GREATER JOB MOBILITY FOR BLACKS, A CENTRAL MAN-POWER PLANNING AUTHORITY TO PLAN MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF SKILLS THAN NOW THE CASE AND TRAINING FOR NEEDS OF FUTURE WITHOUT REGARD TO RACE. IT POINTS OUT THAT MOVEMENT UPWARDS OF SKILL LEVELS FOR BLACKS HAS BEEN EXTREMELY SLOW AND POINTS OUT THAT MOST BLACKS ARE STILL EMPLOYED ONLY AT LOWEST SKILL LEVELS.

3. THE TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (TUCSA) ALSO RECENTLY CALLED FOR A PROBE INTO JOB DISCRIMINATION WHICH, IT SAYS, TENDS TO "PROMOTE FRUSTRATION, HOSTILITY AND HATRED AMONG BLACK WORKERS." IT SAID THAT UNLESS ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION, LEGAL AND TRADITIONAL, ARE ELIMINATED, "THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE COUNTRY WILL BE IRREPARABLY HARMED." IT CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH "A COMMON SET OF LAWS APPLICABLE TO ALL WORKERS OF ALL RACES," CONDEMNS THE VASTLY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURES BY THE STATE ON EDUCATION OF THE DIFFERENT RACES, AND CALLS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CREATE GREATLY EXPANDED FACILITIES FOR TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR BLACKS.

4. COMMENT: CALLS FROM THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS FOR IMPROVED STATUS ARE BUT A PART OF OVERALL INDUSTRIAL REACTION TO EVENTS IN SOWETO AND ELSEWHERE. CONSULATE OFFICERS HAVE LEARNED THAT A NUMBER OF INDUSTRIAL GROUPS IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ARE SHOWING GREAT CONCERN AT THE SITUATION AND HAVE PREPARED OR ARE PREPARING STUDIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT TO EFFECTUATE CHANGE. ONE SUCH GROUP IS A CONSORTIUM OF JOHANNESBURG BUSINESSMEN REPRESENTING VARIOUS SECTORS OF ECONOMY WHO HOPE TO ORGANIZE SCHEME FOR UPGRADING URBAN BLACK HOUSING, TO INCLUDE INTERNAL ELECTRIFICATION, PLUMBING, FLOORING, IMPROVED ROOFING, AND SO ON. CONSORTIUM INCLUDES BUILDING SOCIETIES, UNDER-WRITERS, AND CONTRACTORS, ALL OF WHOM SEE PLAN OF COURSE AS IN THEIR SHORT-TERM INTEREST (IN LIGHT OF HOME CONSTRUCTION SLUMP) AS WELL AS LONG-TERM (SURVIVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN WHITES). CONGEN UNDERSTANDS SAG HAS BEEN RECEPTIVE TO PLAN IN LAST WEEK, THOUGH NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 JOHANN 01408 201716Z

EARLIER. ANOTHER GROUP IS PLANNING SHOPPING CENTERS ON PERIPHERIES OF BLACK TOWNSHIPS WHICH WOULD BE WHITE-FINANCED AND OPERATED AT FIRST, WITH PROSPECT EVENTUALLY OF BLACK OPERATION, CONTROL, AND EVEN PERHAPS OWNERSHIP ONE DAY. MOST OF THESE ENTREPRENEURS ARE ENGLISH-SPEAKING SOUTH AFRICANS (E.G., ACKERMAN OF PICK-AND-PAY SUPERMARKET CHAIN), BUT SOME ARE AFRIKANERS (E.G., MULLER OF NEDBANK). THEY ARE SERIOUS ABOUT PROBLEM AND

THEIR PROPOSED PALLIATIVES, WISHING TO TAKE PREVENTIVE
ACTION BEFORE BLACKS PUSH THEM TO EDGE OF PRECIPICE, BUT
THEY ARE NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT RECEPΤIVITY OF SAG.
JOHNSON

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